

DBA Welcomes New Employees

Mike Eisenman has been appointed as DBA's Deputy Director. Mike has held senior management positions with Georgia-Pacific Corporation and AMF Bowling, Inc., and helped found Colonnade Capital and the executive search company Morgan/Eisenman. He received a BS in Economics, Finance and Labor Relations at the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania.

Shannon Blevins has been hired as DBA's Workforce Services project manager assigned to southwest Virginia. Shannon is a graduate of the University of Virginia's College at Wise and received her MBA from Averett College in Danville. She has served as the Director of Call Center Operations for Travelocity.com and Nexus Communications, and she also worked as the Resource Manager and Training Coordinator for the AT&T Relay Center in Norton. Shannon has extensive management, customer service, and training development and delivery experience and is extremely familiar with the economic development community in southwest Virginia.

Competitive Energy Supply Market Yields Consumer The Choice

The way Virginia businesses buy their energy is changing. For the first time, Virginia commercial consumers may have the opportunity to choose who supplies their electricity or natural gas. Through changes in Virginia law, the Commonwealth on January 1 began the transition toward a competitive energy supply market.

To help Virginians understand this new marketplace, the State Corporation Commission (SCC) launched the "Virginia Energy Choice" consumer education program. To learn more, please contact Virginia Energy Choice at 1-877-YES-2004 or www.yesvachoice.com.

Dominion Virginia Power's website, www.dom.com, provides additional information on the business transition.

Under the previous system, one local utility had the exclusive right to supply your electricity or natural gas and deliver it to your home or business. In a competitive market, you may have the opportunity to choose from among different supplier offers. Your local utility company will continue to deliver energy to your home or business and the SCC will continue to regulate this distribution.

News From The Existing Business Services Division

EBS Offers Umbrella Services

DBA's Existing Business Services (EBS) team is eager to put its umbrella of services to work for your business or economic development program.

With a specialty in the existing business sector of economic development, EBS assists existing businesses and community business alliances, one-on-one, with



News From The Workforce Services Division

It Takes A Village

DBA's Workforce Services team is fortunate to have many success stories from over the years. As part of a relatively small state agency, that success has not been without the help of others. One of the keys to this success has been a low-tech, yet highly effective effort called the Community Meeting.

When Workforce Services first meets with a company, they convene a Community Meeting for the client. Typical participants include local economic developers, chambers of commerce, community colleges, the Virginia Employment Commission, the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services, and the Virginia Department of Social Services. In some areas, the military, AARP, and even high schools have been at the table. Not only do the company representatives learn about all of the available resources, they also only have to explain their needs once. Regardless of the location, DBA's goal is to introduce the company to as many resources as possible for recruiting and training employees.

For more information about the Workforce Services division of DBA, call Preston Wilhelm at (804) 371-8132 or e-mail him at pwilhelm@dba.state.va.us.

business expansion and retention; regulation compliance and ombudsman services; economic information; and general as well as specific business information. Aside from these specialties, EBS staff also provides consulting services including client referral and introduction to additional resources. To put an EBS project manager to work for you, call Jim Witherspoon at (804) 371-8221 or e-mail him at jwitherspoon@dba.state.va.us.

News From The Small Business Development Division

VSBDC Network Announces New Center and 3 New Directors

The Virginia Small Business Development Center (VSBDC) Network is pleased to announce the addition of a new counseling center at **Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC)**. The BRCC SBDC is an affiliate of the James Madison University SBDC, and the two facilities together will comprise the Shenandoah Valley SBDC, which serves the counties of Alleghany, Augusta, Bath, Highland, Page, Rockbridge, Rockingham, and the cities therein. The center at BRCC will provide clients in the southern part of the SVSBDC's service area with a more convenient location, as well as additional resources in the form of counseling and classes at the community college.

Sandra Showalter has been hired as the director of the BRCC SBDC. Sandra has been an administrator at BRCC for 25 years, holding leadership positions in public relations, publications, and fund raising. She has also owned her own business for the past ten years.

Brian Baker has been appointed director of the Rappahannock Region SBDC. Prior to joining the RRSBDC, Brian managed Vecon Substrate Systems, and served as program facilitator at the RRSBDC and assistant controller at White Packing Company, Inc. The RRSBDC's main office is located at the James Monroe Center for Graduate and Professional Studies at Mary Washington College and serves the city of Fredericksburg and the counties of Caroline, King George, Spotsylvania, and Stafford, and the eastern portion of Prince William County.

Penny Kervill has joined the VSBDC Network as director of the RRSBDC Warsaw affiliate center, which serves the Northern Neck and the Middle Peninsula. Penny brings vast experience in both the government and private sector. She has held several senior roles involving program management, economic development, technical training, and alliance building. Most recently, Penny founded and served as president of Eurolink, Ltd.

For more information on the VSBDC Network, visit www.dba.state.va.us/smdev or call (804) 371-8253.

Governor Warner Dedicates Workforce Services Office in Southwest Virginia

Governor Mark R. Warner recently dedicated DBA's new Workforce Services satellite office in Abingdon. DBA's Workforce Services program is nationally recognized as one of the top economic development incentive programs in the nation and was recently ranked third in the nation in Expansion Management magazine's Incentive 2000 edition.

The Workforce Services division office will be co-located with the DBA EBS & Tourism satellite office in the Johnson Center on Main Street in Abingdon. To contact Shannon Blevins, the WFS Project Manager in the new office, call (276) 676-5573.

Call For Entries

The Virginia Manufacturers Association (VMA) is seeking nominations for the **Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards for Manufacturers**, which is supported by the administration and underwritten by VMA Outreach. This awards program encourages Virginia's industries to implement the state's pollution prevention policy and to practice excellent environmental stewardship by recognizing outstanding efforts in these areas each year. These awards are open to any manufacturing company in Virginia (not just VMA members), and we hope that you will encourage any of your contacts who are eligible to submit an application. For more information, visit www.vmaoutreach.com/eeapplications/index.html.



P.O. Box 446
Richmond, VA 23218-0446

Address service requested



Help us cut costs! Please let us know if you would be willing to receive this newsletter electronically or would like to be removed from the mailing list. Email dmelvin@dba.state.va.us or call (804) 371-0371.

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SANDSTON, VA
PERMIT NO. 397